

the aisle to work together to accomplish this effort before another school year comes to a close.

LEVERAGING AND ENERGIZING AMERICA'S
APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS ACT

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Leveraging and Energizing America's Apprenticeship Programs Act, legislation that I have cosponsored.

In the midst of a slow economic recovery, one of the issues plaguing both our workforce and our job creators is a persistent mismatch of employer needs and employee skills. Right now, 10 million unemployed Americans are seeking work, while 4 million jobs remain unfilled. Fortunately, this problem can be solved with a bipartisan commitment to commonsense workforce development initiatives, as demonstrated by the Leveraging and Energizing America's Apprenticeship Programs bill.

By promoting apprenticeship programs, this legislation creates opportunities for highly motivated workers to earn a salary, while gaining the skills they need to succeed in high-demand fields.

I am proud to say that employers in my congressional district in southeastern Pennsylvania have already recognized the value of apprenticeship programs by making hundreds of these opportunities available to those looking to build their job training and skills.

I commend Congressman RODNEY DAVIS for his efforts on this legislation, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support it.

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE OLDER AMERICANS
ACT

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of reauthorizing the Older Americans Act.

The Older Americans Act provides social and nutritional support to members of our senior population and their caregivers. Enacted in 1965, this legislation has improved health outcomes, independence, and quality of life by offering meal delivery, respite care, and other essential services to the most vulnerable members of our population.

Reauthorization of this legislation gives Congress an opportunity to modernize multipurpose senior centers; improve falls prevention and chronic disease self-management training; strengthen laws to combat abuse, neglect, and exploitation; and support our local Area Agencies on Aging.

Mr. Speaker, I offer my support to work with my colleagues to review and advance the legislation passed by the United States Senate last year, as it is an effort that will not only help protect seniors across my district and the U.S., but will ensure that our existing Federal support programs are appropriately tailored to meet the present-day needs of our senior citizens.

PENTAGON WASTEFULNESS IN
AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from

North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I have been coming to the floor for weeks and months to complain about the waste of money and life in Afghanistan. In the last couple weeks, I had an opportunity to read two articles. The first is titled, "This is How the Pentagon Wasted \$17 Billion in Afghanistan," by Emily Leayman. I would like to quote a couple of examples of the Pentagon's waste that she describes in her article.

The Pentagon spent "\$8 billion for a failed drug war: Despite a 14-year effort, Afghanistan now leads the world in heroin production." The Pentagon also spent "\$486 million for useless aircraft: Speaking of planes, 20 planes could not be flown, and most were sold for scrap . . . Legislators like Senators John McCain and James Lankford are fed up with the lack of accountability in spending."

Senators MCCAIN and LANKFORD have joined me in bringing to the public's attention the lack of accountability in Afghanistan. It is astounding, to say the least.

Mr. Speaker, last month John Sopko, the Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, testified before the Senate Committee on Armed Services about a recent report he wrote on the waste in Afghanistan. In that report, he exposed that the Pentagon paid \$6 million to buy nine male Italian goats—the reason they bought the goats from Italy was because they are blond in color—to send to western Afghanistan to set up a farm and try to boost the cashmere industry there in Afghanistan. Now, the Pentagon doesn't even know where the goats are. And the sad thing is, as Mr. Sopko said to the Senate, "We don't know where the goats are. They might have been eaten"—\$6 million. Mr. Speaker, American people could do a lot with \$6 million, I assure you. And they wouldn't be spending \$6 million for nine goats, that I am certain.

The report that Mr. Sopko made reference to is titled, "Report Cites Wasted Pentagon Money in Afghanistan." Mr. Speaker, the waste goes on and on and on, and yet we in the House every year will send more and more money to Afghanistan. We have already been there 14 years. We are going to be there another 8 years because President Obama signed an agreement with Mr. Ghani to be there for 9 more years. We have already been there 1 year, and that means 8 more years. That is 22 years.

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General Campbell, who has been the leader in Afghanistan, but is leaving, says that we need more years to train the Afghans to have a security force. I guess we are going to be there 30 years. I will be dead and gone, for sure, by then.

What a waste of life and money in Afghanistan. It is time for this Congress to meet its responsibility and put pres-

sure on the administration and stop funding Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, I have a poster here. The reason I bring this poster to the floor is to show the sad tragedy of war. There is a wife and a little girl. The husband and daddy is in a flag-draped casket.

The reason I bring this matter to the floor is that I have signed over 11,000 letters to families and extended families who died in Afghanistan and Iraq. Last Sunday I signed one letter for an Army sergeant who died in Afghanistan. Mr. Speaker, I thought: How sad. How sad it is for that family. It is just so sad.

It doesn't have to happen. We need to debate bringing our troops home from Afghanistan, and we need to debate stopping the funding for the war in Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, before closing, I want to remind the House that this is the longest war in the history of America. I don't know who said it, but they said it right: Afghanistan is the graveyard of empires.

I know there is going to be a headstone that says that the empire known as America spent so much blood and money in Afghanistan. It is financially broke. We are \$19.1 trillion in debt right now.

Let's bring our troops out of Afghanistan. Let them fight the civil war themselves and decide what they want for Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, I ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform, bless the families of our men in uniform. And, God, please continue to bless America.

STOP ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. JOLLY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about an important congressional reform initiative that I have introduced in this body.

I have had the opportunity to study Congress from virtually every angle. I graduated from college as a young intern who drove up here having never been north of Tennessee. As my predecessor said and I shared: I never thought I would meet a Member of Congress, much less have the great opportunity and honor to be one.

Through virtually every staff role over the past 15 or 20 years, I have had a chance to study this body. There are a few experiences now, as a sitting Member of Congress, that I simply cannot accept.

One of them—the most pressing one—is the amount of time that Members of Congress are expected or, in some cases, directed to spend on raising money.

We all know it. Every Member of Congress understands that you arrive with great expectations only to learn the obligation to spend time raising money. There is a quiet anger among many Members about that.